

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1288

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, PGOV, CZ
SUBJECT: EB/EWT DIRECTOR ROOT'S CALL ON MFA

REF: (A) PRAGUE 1284 (B) PRAGUE 1193, (C) STATE 112019

1. SUMMARY: IN ADDITION TO CALLS ON TRADE TOPICS, ROOT ALSO DISCUSSED BROADER BILATERAL ISSUES AT MFA. ZANTOVSKY, PRINCIPAL CZECHOSLOVAK NEGOTIATOR OF 1974 CLAIMS ACCORD, PROVIDED LATEST GOC COMMENTS ON CLAIMS/GOLD AND STATEMENT ON NEED FOR PROGRESS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ADDITION TO CALLS REPORTED REFS A AND B, WILLIAM ROOT, DIRECTOR OF EB/EWT, ALSO CALLED MAY 10 ON ZANTOVSKY, SIXTH DEPT. HEAD, MIN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. ZANTOVSKY MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:
A) ON CLAIMS/GOLD HE FELT CZECHOSLOVAKS HAD MADE THE MOST CONCESSIONS THEY COULD, WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF ONE LUMP-SUM SETTLEMENT RATHER THAN TIME PAYMENTS. THE ABSOLUTE AMOUNT, HE ADDED, WAS PROBABLY FIRM AS THE GOC "WENT TO THE CEILING" IN 1974. AT ANOTHER POINT, ZANTOVSKY REMARKED THAT SEN. LONG'S CALL FOR ADDITIONAL DOLS 15 MILLION WAS "TOO HIGH." COMMENT: NO DOUBT FOR TACTICAL PURPOSES, ZANTOVSKY HAS BEEN TAKING A MORE RIGID LINE RECENTLY ON RENEGOTIATION OF THE 1974 CLAIMS/GOLD SETTLEMENT. IN THE PAST, HE HAS USUALLY ADVANCED THE POSITION THAT GOC "WOULD CONSIDER ANY REASONABLE
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OFFER" ON RENEGOTIATION TERMS. END COMMENT. B) ZANTOVSKY SPOKE OF NEED FOR A "SYMBOL OF PROGRESS OF SOME SORT" IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WHICH WOULD COME THROUGH PARLIAMENTARIAN VISITS, SIGNING OF EXCHANGES AGREEMENT OR OTHER CONCRETE ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND HE MENTIONED UPCOMING VISIT OF CODEL MCGOVERN AS EXAMPLE OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR USEFUL DIALOGUE.
C) IN PASSING, HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT DAVID

ROCKEFELLER OF CHASE MANHATTAN BANK HAD RECENTLY MET WITH
CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR TO UN AND EXPRESSED INTEREST
IN FURTHER CONTACT BETWEEN HIS BANK AND GOC.

3. IN MAY 17 TALK WITH CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
CORRESPONDENT BOURNE, ZANTOVSKY SPOKE BRIEFLY ABOUT
CLAIMS/GOLD. WHILE GENERALLY LAMENTING THE LACK OF
PROGRESS IN US-GOC BILATERAL RELATIONS, ZANTOVSKY TOOK
A SOMEWHAT ALOOF POSITION, NOTING THAT IN ABSENCE OF
GREATER CONTACTS WITH U.S., HIS DEPARTMENT WAS BUSY WITH
U.K., CANADA AND OTHERS. HE SEEMED SIMULTANEOUSLY TO
WANT A STIMULUS TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS BUT TO AVOID
CASTING CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN THE ROLE OF DEMANDEUR.
BYRNE

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